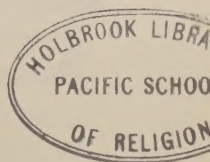


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CALL TO
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IN SOCIETY

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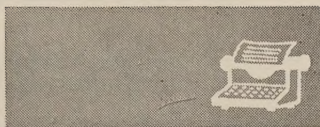
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THE SECOND GENERAL SYNOD OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST meeting at Oberlin, Ohio, from July 5-9, 1959, adopted three statements which have significance for social action in the life of our churches: the Statement of Faith, the Call to Christian Action in Society, and the Statement on Pronouncements.

The Statement of Faith is a magnificent summation in modern terms of the timeless truth of the gospel. Through it we testify to God who "seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin"; who "judges men and nations"; who creates and renews "the Church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues and races." We hear him call "us into his Church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be his servants in the service of men, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil." We hear his promise of "courage in the struggle for justice and peace."

The Call to Christian Action in Society brings into one prophetic document the goals for our common life, many of which had been stated previously by the Congregational Christian Churches and by the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

The Statement on Pronouncements affirms the responsibility of the General Synod and its agencies to speak on public issues; and makes valuable suggestions concerning the procedures for doing so.

Church members will want to study the three statements which follow and to consider their implications for the life of the church. They will find helpful suggestions in "Social Action: Response to God's Grace" by Dr. Fred Hoskins and in the symposium entitled "Next Steps for Churches in International Affairs, American Culture, Race Relations, and Political Life." Church leaders will find valuable resources for study and action on pages 31-35 and suggestions for using the Call in services of worship on pages 35-36.

Statement of Faith

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father, and to his deeds we testify:

He calls the worlds into being,
creates man in his own image
and sets before him the ways of life and death.

He seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness
and sin.

He judges men and nations by his righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen
Lord,
he has come to us
and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to himself.

He bestows upon us his Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues,
and races.

He calls us into his Church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be his servants in the service of men,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.

He promises to all who trust him
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
his presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in his kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto him. Amen.

Call

To Christian Action in Society

The procedure used in preparing the Call makes it representative of the insights and convictions of many churches and their members. The first drafts were written by members of the CCSA staff and submitted to the appropriate committees of the Council for their suggestions. The preliminary draft of the Call was then adopted by the CCSA at its meeting in February, 1959, and sent to the churches for study and revision with the March issue of CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY. The Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Board of International Missions, and the Board of Home Missions joined the CCSA as co-sponsors of the Call. Individuals, local church committees, and state conference and synodical committees sent suggestions for changes to the CCSA staff, which it incorporated in a new draft. The revised version of the Call was submitted to the Review Committee on the Report of the CCSA at the meeting of the Second General Synod of the United Church of Christ in Oberlin. The Review Committee presented the Call to the General Synod which adopted it as its own statement on July 8, 1959. Copies may be obtained from the Cleveland or the New York office of the CCSA. One hundred free copies are available for each church; additional copies are \$2.00 per hundred.

The Gospel is the Good News of what God has done and is doing in the world. In Jesus Christ God entered the arena of human history, grappled with the principalities and powers of evil, won a victory over those powers, and made manifest his love and gracious purpose toward all men. In grateful response, the Christian Church seeks to tell the story of God's action in ways which are persuasive for the men and women of our day.

At the same time, the church responds to God's saving act by seeking His will in all human relationships. For God as revealed in Jesus Christ is the ruler of all human affairs—nations, social orders, institutions. To Him belong our souls and bodies, our possessions and cultures, our churches and communities.

God has made us to live together in community. Without love of neighbor there is no love of God. Without service to men there is no service to God. We live, we rise, we fall as members of one family under God.

We confess the pride and greed which separate us from God and from each other. Before God we repent of our smugness and sloth, our absorption with self and neglect of neighbor. The judgment of God lies upon us and all our affairs.

We rejoice in many signs of the power and grace of God in the events of our time. People are asking recognition of their God-given worth. Barriers between races, classes, and nations are being brought down. We are thankful that God is stirring his people against injustice and oppression.

THE WORLD OF NATIONS

We live in a world of nation states, constantly growing in number. This world has become so interdependent and inter-related that nearly every action has an appalling number of relations and effects. The power struggle is therefore greatly intensified, particularly between communist and non-communist states.

Deeper than the divisions, however, is mankind's essential unity under God. Deeper also are the common danger, the common need, the common hope. Nations must therefore develop a larger measure of mutual confidence through more creative use of peaceful methods for relieving international tensions.

In the contemporary situation each nation will inevitably seek to maintain military force at a level considered necessary to national security. We must, however, avoid the militarization of United States foreign policy. We should strive for the development of an effective and enforceable body of international law.

WE THEREFORE CALL UPON OUR CHURCHES AND THEIR MEMBERS TO PRAY AND WORK:

For peace, justice, and the welfare of all nations and peoples;

For the United Nations as a major resource for the settlement of disputes, for peaceful change, and for economic and social development;

For a full implementation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

For creative sharing among nations of persons, ideas, and skills;

For deeper awareness of the problems, legitimate interests, and fears of other peoples, especially those in the newer nations and in nations under communist rule;

For effective international control and reduction of all national armaments, including the testing of nuclear weapons;

For the use of our wealth, personal resources, and trade policies in a world-wide attack upon human misery;

For a clearer demonstration through our own national life that both order and justice can be achieved under free institutions;

For the extension and strengthening of the world-wide Christian community, that it may help to provide spiritual foundations for a world community, combat ignorance, superstition, and traditional social evils, and serve as a reconciling fellowship among all peoples.

AMERICAN CULTURE

Our cities rise higher. Our suburbs spread afar. Streams of people move from place to place across the land. Astounding inventions provide abundance of goods, swiftness of communication, miracles of healing, and relief from many burdensome tasks. Opportunities for educational and cultural enrichment are multiplied.

In the midst of this abundance, we are beset by much that is trivial, dehumanizing, and vulgar. Prodigious plenty tempts us to selfish indulgence while millions of people in our land and abroad live in want. Private consumption has reached unprecedented levels while public services on which all of us depend are starved. Concentrations of power, controlling the channels of information, beguile masses of people into unthinking conformity and slavish striving for goods that do not satisfy. Much of our leisure time is devoted to forms of entertainment and escape that dull us to the world's problems and our neighbor's need.

We are tempted to love things and use people when we should love people and use things. And even in the midst of crowds our lives are often empty, anxious, and alone.

Now as always God calls us to a new life that offers genuine meaning, faith, and community. He sets before us goals that are higher than comfort and success. He summons us to develop our capacities for mental and spiritual growth. He frees us from our bondage to the networks of opinion and taste. He saves us from calling good evil or evil good. He searches the streets of our cities and the by-ways of the countryside—not for the church that takes pride in its popularity, its wealth, or the splendor of its buildings—but for the church that does justice and seeks truth, that cares for people and loves the Gospel, lifting up family, community, and world.

WE THEREFORE CALL UPON OUR CHURCHES AND THEIR MEMBERS
TO PRAY AND WORK:

For a deeper understanding of the Christian meaning of daily work;

For the participation of Christians in organizations of farmers, labor, management, the professions, and other vocations, encouraging democratic procedures, wise practices, and concern for the public interest;

For fuller appreciation of the role, rights, and responsibilities of both organized labor and management in the democratic functioning of an industrial society;

For policies that safeguard the well-being of the farmer and the farm family as well as the interest of the general public in the efficient production of abundant food and fiber;

For the conservation and development of the earth's resources for the benefit of mankind now and in the future;

For economic institutions and practices which provide meaningful work, serve human needs, eliminate blighting poverty, prevent unemployment and harmful inflation, and bring about more equitable sharing in the goods and services which our productivity makes possible;

For action to strengthen the family and counteract the forces making for family disorganization;

For the support and expansion of necessary public services such as schools, transportation, and health programs;

For increased educational and cultural opportunities for all;

For more effective programs of education and action in church and community on the meaning and effect of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, and gambling;

For the provision of adequate social services for special groups such as the young, the aging, the handicapped, the mentally ill, and the victims of alcohol and drugs;

For the protection of migrant workers and their families;

For the admission of more immigrant refugees and their integration into the American community;

For better methods in the treatment and rehabilitation of those convicted of offenses against the law;

For the use of leisure time in creative avocations, in wholesome recreation, in strengthening family life, in enrichment of human culture, and in service to church and community.

RACE RELATIONS

Jesus Christ as Lord and Shepherd of all men requires us as his followers to repent of those violations of brotherhood and justice which create separation, tension, and conflict between men of different races and to manifest—within the Church, the Body of Christ, and within the community and nation—acts worthy of such repentance.

WE THEREFORE CALL UPON OUR CHURCHES AND THEIR MEMBERS TO PRAY AND WORK:

For the elimination of pride and prejudice from our hearts;

For the end of racial segregation and discrimination in our communities—in church life, in housing, in employment, in education, in public accommodations and services, and in the exercise of political rights;

For the alleviation of poverty, ignorance, illness, and all other handicaps which are aggravated by unequal opportunity and by segregation imposed by law or custom;

For the furtherance of human rights throughout the world and respect for all men as persons created in the image of God.

POLITICAL LIFE

God holds political life under his providence and judgment. It is the area in which men and nations make some of the most fateful decisions of our time. In this process controversy and compromise serve important and necessary functions.

WE THEREFORE CALL UPON OUR CHURCHES AND THEIR MEMBERS TO PRAY AND WORK:

For the support of effective, representative, and responsible government;

For active participation of Christians in political life as voters, workers in parties, candidates, office holders, and civil servants;

For the critical evaluation, within the fellowship of the church and in the perspective of the Christian faith, of the policies and practices of candidates, office holders, and political parties;

For a church with bonds of Christian fellowship so strong that it dares to discuss and act upon civic and political issues;

For maintaining the independence of the churches and the state, and for creative cooperation between them.

DEDICATION

To these tasks we dedicate ourselves in the name of God who calls us to seek justice for all his children and to love our neighbor not only in word but in deed. In him is our confidence and our trust.

Statement

on Pronouncements

The General Synod adopted as its own the following statement proposed by the Executive Council.

When the Church or any of its instrumentalities exercises a prophetic role in society, criticizing its complacency, judging its evils, and otherwise attempting to bear a Christian witness concerning issues on which opinions differ, no responsible group of Christians can hope to escape the penalty which the prophets and reformers have always incurred. It can be hoped only that their Christian integrity will not be questioned just because the word they speak may be an unpopular one, and that they themselves are clear as to the nature and limits of the authority their utterances possess. To this end the Executive Council registers the following observations:

- The General Synod, even though numerically and geographically the most widely representative body of the United Church, can claim authority and representative character for its utterances and enactments only in the measure of their inherent truth and fidelity to the Word of God.
- A church agency speaks only for itself, not for the whole fellowship, except as members of that fellowship concur or their assent is won by the weight of what is spoken.
- An utterance of the General Synod or of any of its agencies binds no member of the United Church except as he is convinced and his commitment secured by what he accepts as the rightness of the utterance itself. This is axiomatic for the freedom of the Christian man.
- The General Synod and its instrumentalities, however, are composed of ministers and lay members whose devotion, interest and competence have been recognized in their selection by their fellow-members to serve in such bodies; and their utterances and enactments therefore merit, even from those who disagree, respect and serious consideration.

- Every agency is urged, in published announcements of its views, to make clear the authority on which its statement is based in a way to avoid any misunderstanding of other bodies in the matter.

- Any agency which takes a position on an issue on which views diverge, may serve to evoke creative exchange of thought and may, and frequently does, serve the Lord of the Church by stimulating the mind and pricking the conscience of the Church, its individual members, and of those outside the Church as well.

- Because the Church's agencies are composed of ministers and lay members chosen by their fellow-members to serve where they do, we should thank God for the creative intelligence they exercise as followers of Christ in the discharge of their responsibilities, and judge their corporate word and deed as testimonies offered by them to us and the world in good faith.

We must remember always that many, if not most, of the Church's finest hours were when it stood for what the multitude denied or decried, and that the continuing symbol of the Church's faith and witness is a cross.

WORLD SEMINAR

June 22-August 23, 1960

The World Seminar sponsored by the CCSA will spend 62 days in 16 countries. After two days of orientation in San Francisco, the group will fly to Hawaii, Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Philippines, Thailand, India, Pakistan, Lebanon, United Arab Republic, Jordan, Israel, Greece, Yugoslavia, Austria, and Germany.

Members of the group will visit the major tourist attractions, but they will also gain insight concerning the religious, social, economic, and political problems of the nations visited.

Dr. and Mrs. Ray Gibbons will lead the Seminar. The cost of the trip is \$2,800. Applications should be sent to Dr. Ray Gibbons, Director, Council for Christian Social Action, 289 Park Avenue South, New York 10, N. Y.



Social Action:

Response to God's Grace

These lines are being written almost immediately after the meeting of the Second General Synod at Oberlin. Many memories of that distinguished assembly are vivid. Several of them will survive to become the subjects of essays by historians. In years to come students will trace the life of the United Church of Christ back to one and another tap root, and surely Oberlin will be among them.

One of the things for which the Oberlin General Synod will be singled out in years to come is the fact that at its first meeting, after the formal union in 1957, the United Church of Christ adopted a Call to Christian Action in Society. It is impressive that the United Church of Christ adopted what loosely, and inaccurately, has been called a Social Creed before it adopted a constitution. As a literal fact, it adopted the Call to Christian Action in Society before it adopted its Statement of Faith. Admittedly, this reference is taking some advantage of the fortuitous arrangements of the agenda.

By Fred Hoskins, D.D., Minister and Secretary of the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches; and Co-president of the United Church of Christ.

Prompt adoption of the Call is significant

While no one properly may underestimate the importance and wisdom of the content of the Call, perhaps the greatest significance of its adoption is not in its substance. Truth is, that the uniting communions long have been stating their Christian convictions regarding various social issues. The Call is an impressive statement of the best insights of the years; it is a firm platform upon which the United Church of Christ expects to stand.

This writer ventures the opinion that time will prove the greatness of the act of adopting the Call to Christian Action in Society to have been in the promptness of the action. A part of the whole church of Christ was taking form there at Oberlin and in taking form it acknowledged its prophetic obligation. Need it be said that in acknowledging this obligation the United Church of Christ was not being presumptuous? In taking the role of prophet the United Church through its General Synod was not saying that it was omniscient and competent to cry "Thus saith the Lord" with regard to every subject under heaven.

In the enthusiastic adoption of the Call to Christian Action in Society the United Church of Christ expressed its conviction that the faith is relevant for the world in which we live. In the Statement of Faith the United Church affirmed its determination to testify to the *deeds* of ". . . God, the Eternal Spirit, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and our Father . . ."; and in the Call it pointed to the response of men to the deeds of God. That response, the Call reminds us, is to be across the whole broad fabric of human life—in race relations, among the nations, in political life, and up and down every strand of the warp and woof of our culture.

Oberlin was thousands of local churches writ large

The General Synod was the local church in a dimension beyond a particular community. Notwithstanding, it was addressing itself to the issues and concerns which are domiciled in local churches. Race problems are minimal in a national church meeting but they are immense and often terrifying in a local church. International relations and political problems and cultural concerns cannot show themselves with much immediacy

in a General Synod, but most of the people who sit at the center where decisions are made regarding them are members of local churches.

Social action is essential to the local church

The local church is the primary unit in the United Church, and this is so because it is there that God most immediately confronts his people. In the local congregation God confronts his people in the Word, in the sacraments, in the rites of marriage and burial, in corporate worship, and in the celebration of holy seasons. It is in the local church that the deeds of God are revealed with greatest clarity.

It follows that the local church is where man's response to God's deeds can best be made. For a congregation to confront a God who gave himself in sacrificial love for its reconciliation, it is not much of a response simply to say, "Amen." To such a deed the only seemly response is for people in local churches to begin acting like saved men and behaving like a redeemed community. A man who is redeemed from a measure of bias and selfishness and reconciled to God and to his brother will busy himself in his own church and community, as well as in distant parts of the world. He will live a life that is a reasonable response to the deeds of a gracious God. John put the matter rightly: "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:11).

All this is the business of the congregation; it is the responsibility of the local church. This is what social action is about. Social action is learning and thinking and speaking and voting and working and hiring and planning and playing and hoping and praying like a Community of the Redeemed. It is the response of men who have in fact been reconciled to God and to their neighbors.

A local church cannot get by with congratulating itself that God was so remarkably gracious toward its members and at the same time push off on somebody else the response to such love. The church has to respond through the lives of its people. To make the response may call for committees and sermons and discussions and unpopular positions, but the church must respond. This is life. This is the church. This is the Christian religion.



Next Steps for Churches in:

- INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
- RACE RELATIONS
- AMERICAN CULTURE
- POLITICAL LIFE

The "Call to Christian Action in Society" (pages 5 to 10) brings together in one statement the convictions of many members of the United Church of Christ concerning the bearing of the Gospel upon our society. It is a declaration of our intent to pray and work for changes in our common practices. It is a platform upon which our churches will stand in the coming years. It is a call to action.

Four authors consider the problems discussed in the Call and suggest practical steps which churches may take in response to it. Vernon H. Holloway suggests two aspects of international relations which call for study and action now. Huber F. Klemme, Chester L. Marcus and Ray Gibbons deal respectively with American culture, race relations, and political life.



• INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

When church members consider international affairs they face three temptations: to deny responsibility for the plight of mankind; to despair of politics, especially international relations; and to look for easy solutions when perseverance and sacrificial effort are required. The Call to Christian Action in Society will help them to resist these temptations.

The Call directs our attention to basic issues in "The World of Nations." It provokes consideration of fundamental questions which have not been clearly resolved in the thought of the churches. How can religious and moral concern be applied to the stubborn questions of international life? What is our *Christian* responsibility as churchmen who are citizens of the United States?

Any outline of "next steps" for the churches is inevitably selective. It presupposes judgments as to what is morally imperative and what is politically possible in relations between nation states, and especially in American foreign policy.

Basic issues of international relations

Those who read with care will note that the section on "The World of Nations" begins with a sober diagnosis of the struggle for power and security in an interdependent world of nation states. The diagnosis, which was necessarily brief, and the list of areas of concern which follows it, have been stated with

By Vernon H. Holloway, Minister, Brecksville Congregational Church, Brecksville, Ohio.

moral sensitivity to the dilemmas which confront the statesmen. American military power, for example, is neither idealized nor denounced. The United Nations is regarded as a major resource but not as a panacea. The conflict with the Soviet Union is recognized as one in which a balance of power, however precarious, is necessary to discourage Soviet imperialism; yet it is equally necessary for the United States to understand the legitimate interests and fears of the Soviet Union and to seek patiently for possible diplomatic settlements. The plight of the newer and poorer nations is rightly referred to as a problem requiring sympathetic understanding and help from America.

This approach is constructive without being utopian. Nations will not act contrary to their interests, and are incapable of self-sacrifice. The moral task of the statesman is to protect and to promote the nation's security and welfare in ways which help rather than hinder the mutual needs and interests of other nations and peoples. This requires elements of public opinion which are informed and are prepared to support or to demand enlightened policies. The churches have a duty to help define the national interest with breadth and depth which transcend national loyalty with a vision of God's sovereignty and the universal need for justice and order.

Opportunities for our churches

Worship, penitence and prayer, in response to God's love, are constantly needed within our churches. Fellowship with God in Christ both requires and provides renewal of our spirits. When we look carefully at the United States we see a mixed and diverse society, which includes many groups, interests and loyalties. We need to realize that public opinion which influences the course of national policy is continually threatened by nationalist and other temptations to disregard the interests of international order.

We must therefore ask of ourselves and our churches whether we have the vision and the courage to study, to discuss, and to clarify what is at stake in several areas of American foreign policy. One test of the integrity and vitality of our churches is the extent to which these questions can be seriously explored by groups of laymen. But these groups will need help and encouragement from their pastors, study materials such

as those available from the CCSA, and speakers who are informative and challenging.

From a pastor's viewpoint, there are two questions which call for study and discussion in adult groups during the coming months:

Economic aid for the poorer nations. With few exceptions the countries which have recently gained independence from former colonial rule are also the poorest economically. They lack the capital and the skills with which to increase and to diversify their economic output. Their political stability is endangered by expanding populations and popular demands for economic progress. Their situation makes communist propaganda sound enticing. Most of the nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America are poor economically. The average annual per capita income in these areas is about one tenth of what it is in the U. S. A. The humanitarian and the political implications are profound.

World politics, for example, will be greatly influenced by the success or failure of India and southeastern Asia to achieve economic progress without succumbing to totalitarianism. If they are to be successful they must have assistance from America and the West which is free from pressures regarding military alliances.

Our American predicament is that we lack perspective, leadership, and the public opinion which would enable the nation to realize its vital interest in assisting the poorer countries to develop their natural and social resources. We have largely neglected these nations, unless they were in the sphere of our military interest. Last year we appropriated over \$45 billion for military purposes, and a little over \$1 billion for non-military economic aid. We could easily afford \$2 to \$3 billion annually for a more systematic program, which would be far less than we spend on liquor, or tobacco, or cosmetics.

After discussing economic aid for poorer nations, individuals or appointed groups should follow through by expressing their convictions to their elected officials in Washington. They should seek help from state conference and synodical social action committees concerning the timing of appropriate action.

Military power and diplomacy. If our nation must maintain military force to defend itself and its allies against Soviet imperialism, it should do so with patience and with the determina-

tion to live with this problem in the hope that Soviet leadership will eventually find it necessary to change its revolutionary doctrine. Our churches can help the nation to avoid self-righteousness, fanaticism, and the urge to engage in "preventive war." We can help support public opinion conducive to the patient search for diplomatic settlements of tensions and for methods for the control of arms.

The Nationwide Program for Peace

These and related subjects are part of the Nationwide Program of Education and Action for Peace, which extends through June of 1960—an interdenominational effort which deserves the support of our churches. (For resources, see pages 32 and 33.)



• AMERICAN CULTURE

The Call makes three important observations about our American society. First, it recognizes the abundance we enjoy—not only in material goods but in the means to health, leisure, education and cultural enrichment. Second, it acknowledges our moral failure to realize the highest possibilities of this opu-

By Huber F. Klemme, D.D., Director of the Commission on Christian Social Action of the Evangelical and Reformed Church, and Associate Director of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ.

lence—the paradox that amid this plenty there is poverty both in body and in spirit. Third, it proclaims God's call and saving action that free us to find meaning and community in his service. The statement then sets forth some goals for prayer and work in the situation.

There is little need to dwell on our contemporary plight. Penetrating criticisms and challenging studies have laid bare the ironies of an "affluent society" that has reversed the axiom that we produce in order to consume. Reminders of "pockets of poverty" disturb our complacent indifference. We have been made conscious of the concentrations of power which control our access to goods and services and which in some cases direct our behavior and opinions as well. Though we are warned of the dangers of conformity, few have questioned the double standard which lauds increased production and ownership of automobiles and television sets while it regards expenditures for schools and highways as necessary evils.

Suggestions for study and action

How can a congregation in St. Louis, in a New England village, or in the Great Plains get a grip on these problems and do something about them? That will depend to a degree upon the local leadership and its resources. Here are a few suggestions which churches can adapt to their situations:

- *Cultivate an understanding of stewardship which is relevant to the personal and social decisions we face in the economic order.* The Bible has much to say about the meaning, use, and abuse of material goods. This teaching is reflected in what the Call says about conservation; about providing and using educational and cultural opportunities; about our attitude toward alcohol, narcotics, and gambling; about our neglect of essential public services such as highways, transportation, health services, schools; about our personal and national standard of living on a planet where most people lack the basic essentials of life. The Christian understanding of individual and corporate accountability applies to the use we make of our time and influence, and to the decisions we make at the polls and on the job.

- *Develop a sense of the Christian significance of the daily work of every member.* This might be furthered by sermons on

the Christian doctrine of vocation, or by discussions in men's and women's fellowships regarding the problem of being Christian in one's daily work. The National Council of Churches has published a useful discussion guide, entitled *You, Your Church, and Your Job*, based on a study of this subject by the World Council of Churches.

In addition to study and discussion, members of the church should be taught to regard it as their duty to take part in the occupational group for which they are eligible such as the farm organization, the labor union, the professional group, or the employers' association; and to work within it for just policies and democratic procedures. Ministers are inclined to criticize members who absent themselves from church meetings to attend union meetings. Instead, they should encourage them to participate and remind them that by so doing they can be the church in action, hammering out policies that serve the common good. Some churches have formed groups made up of members of a single occupation, who discuss what it means to be a Christian dairy farmer, a Christian lawyer, a Christian engineer. Some such groups have discussed with each other the opportunities, problems, responsibilities, and frustrations of being a Christian in management or labor. Such confrontation would be far more appropriate and exciting than much that goes on under the name of "church work" or "lay activity." It would give added meaning both to the church and to daily work.

- *Express an active concern for the common welfare, particularly of those groups in the community and in the world who have special needs.* Some of these groups are mentioned in the Call—the family, the young, the aging, the alcoholic, the migrant worker, the refugee, the mentally ill, those who run afoul of the law. A church would do well to study its community to see who is being "left out," and to examine the pronouncements of denominational and interdenominational bodies to keep informed as to the needs which exist and the ways proposed for dealing with them.

- *Seek commitment to social justice which deals creatively with the complexities of economic policy and with the conflicts of interest and opinion which are involved in such problems.* For example, the Call does not say yesterday's, today's, or tomorrow's agricultural policy is good or bad. It sets up the

norms, commonly overlooked, by which any such policy is to be judged and the goal toward which we must strive. It calls for a policy that will safeguard both the welfare of the farm family and the public interest in providing a sufficiency of food and fiber. But we shall need to work diligently at analyzing rival proposals and constructing a farm policy that meets these criteria and not some false standard such as complete non-regulation by government (or its opposite).

The Call emphasizes "the role, rights, and responsibilities of both organized labor and management in the democratic functioning of an industrial society." It does not pre-judge the rightness of one side or the other in a specific dispute, such as a strike. When such events occur, church members should get the facts and work for frank discussion looking toward understanding and eventual reconciliation. The principle has been long acknowledged that when one group refuses to recognize the other or refuses to bargain in good faith, the Protestant churches have something to say on both moral and economic grounds. We must continually seek to discover how to make organized power responsible.

Other knotty problems with which Christians must deal are taxes, inflation, and economic legislation. The statement of social goals is no substitute for careful study but must go hand in hand with it.

The church transcends differences

More important than any other factor is the development of such a bond of serious Christian fellowship in the local church that within it persons of diverse economic, social, and cultural background can work out their approach as Christians to the problems of the common life. Sometimes there will be sufficient consensus so that action can be taken in the name of the church, or of a majority of the members of the church, or of an official board or committee of the church. Sometimes it will be best to suggest that each person act as a Christian in his various roles in the community and in the economic order. In any event, the church will be acting as the church—the *ekklesia* and the *koinonia*, the fellowship of those who are called, not to conform to a culture that is off balance but to obey the God who redeems and reconciles this world to himself.



• RACE RELATIONS

"Jesus Christ as Lord and Shepherd of all men requires us as his followers to repent of those violations of brotherhood and justice which create tension and conflict between men of different races and to manifest—within the Church, the Body of Christ, and within the community and nation—acts worthy of such repentance." This statement in the Call recognizes that repentance is not enough but that it must be coupled with new resolution to move with God's help toward something better.

The moral and theological nature of racial tension

The Christian faith is centered in two relationships: with God and with our fellowmen. In the Christian personality the two are inseparably linked. Six of the Ten Commandments deal with man's relationships with man, and almost two-thirds of the recorded words of Christ deal with man's relationship with his fellowman.

It is regrettable that much consideration of the crises in human relations has been in sociological and legal terms and has

By Chester L. Marcus, Secretary for Racial and Cultural Relations of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ.

tended to ignore the fact that wrong relationships with our fellowmen stem from our own alienation from God. We have overlooked some basic theological affirmations, such as the Christian doctrines of creation, God's love, the sacredness of human personality, of justice and the redemptive death of Christ for all men. Therefore, we must affirm that our concern for brotherhood is not merely legal and social, but that it is religious in origin. The ethical demand for justice is one of the imperatives of our faith; it grows out of our belief in a righteous God who demands just relationships among men.

We must declare again that we are children of God. In the light of his truth we are also sinners; our brotherhood is both in sin and in our common need for a mediator to make our peace with God, who is our common Father. It has been said that "at the foot of the cross the ground is level," for there we all stand equally in need of God's grace.

All Christians know that every man has inherent rights granted by God in creation. The state may recognize and protect these rights, but it does not bestow them. They are God-given and are a part of every man's birthright. Our founding fathers stated this truth in the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." Who can with impunity deny to any man what God has given him in creation?

The theological basis for human relations and the Christian responsibility to work for just and harmonious relationships among all groups in our society have been clearly stated by almost every major religious body in America. We have put in beautiful resolutions the ideals of our faith concerning brotherhood. The task which remains is for us to find ways of translating our ideals into a workable reality where they will have meaning in the common life.

Suggestions for action

The question for most church people is: What can we do and where shall we begin? These suggestions may be helpful:

- *Begin with confession and repentance.* The Call enjoins church members to "repent of those violations of brotherhood

and justice which create separation, tension and conflict." Far from being hopeless this is the beginning of hope. All redemption starts with confession. We have some sins to confess at the point of brotherhood. We are a part of a society which denies to many of its citizens fulfillment of the legitimate aspirations of free men. By overt acts, complicity and silent acquiescence we have helped to perpetuate inequality and injustice. We have not pursued justice, neither have we loved our neighbor as ourselves. We have heaped grievous burdens upon those who are least able to bear them. Through our practices of discrimination and segregation we have robbed many of our brothers of their dignity as children of God. For these sins we are sorry and ashamed. No rationalization of a segregated system can bring the peace of soul which comes only as we confess our sins before God and seek his help in dealing with all men without regard for race.

Having confessed our share of the corporate sin of racism in our church and society we might move to some practical ways of implementing our Christian faith. This can be done as we bring the problem of race to God in worship and prayer.

- *Affirm the Christian understanding of man and help church members understand that all men have worth and dignity because they are children of God.* We may conduct study sessions on the biblical teachings on race and on human relations. It would be fruitful to study the racial practices of the early church, the resolutions of the fellowships joining in the United Church of Christ, and the statements of the National Council of Churches which bear upon this subject. (See pages 34 and 35.)

- *Study the findings of anthropology, biology, psychology, and other sciences concerning race.* Since factual information based on years of careful research is available, the Christian should not be guided in his thinking by stereotypes and half truths. Compare our findings with our own previous beliefs and practices, and Biblical teaching on race.

- *Provide experiences that will enable church members to become acquainted with individuals of minority groups who share their interests and cultural background.* Many white Christians have never had the opportunity of knowing Negro Christians as persons. The church is uniquely qualified to build bridges between the races, thus helping both groups to overcome the

emotional barriers which linger long after intellectual barriers have disappeared. Joint meetings centered on subjects other than race and worship services can be invaluable in helping Church people to mature emotionally at the point of race.

- *Minister to all people in the community without regard to race, color or national origin.* Remember that Christ died for all men and that each person is the object of God's love and has a claim upon our concern.

- *Work to remove barriers based upon race in employment, education, housing, public accommodations, etc.* Study and discussion will bear little fruit unless we involve ourselves in the struggle for that which is just and honorable for all men. Use the methods of education, negotiation and legislation.

- *Support organizations that are working for racial justice, such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the Urban League and the Anti-Defamation League.*



• POLITICAL LIFE

Many of the most important decisions that Christians are called upon to make today are political. "At probably no time in history," writes John Cogley, in *Commonweal*, "has political activity been more crucial than today. It is literally true that

By Ray Gibbons, D.D., Director of the Council for Social Action of the Congregational Christian Churches and of the Council for Christian Social Action of the United Church of Christ.

the survival of Western civilization at its best, and perhaps the very physical existence of mankind, are at stake." Not only is our national security at stake; our civil liberties, racial relations, production and employment, schools, health and welfare are also largely secured through political action.

Our Christian faith makes unusual demands upon government, upon rulers and subjects, upon the authorities and the citizens. This faith arises out of the prophetic tradition which interprets governments as established, sustained, and judged by God. Leaders of government are under a higher authority to whom they are responsible for their conduct. We have limited, responsible, and representative government, because both people and rulers are responsible to God.

Politics, therefore, is not a "game" or a "racket" but a field for responsible Christian action. It is crucially important that the political decisions of our time be made in the context of the Call which states that "God holds political life under his providence and judgment."

Why do churches avoid political issues?

While Christians may recognize political action as an individual responsibility, there is still general avoidance of political affairs in the program of the churches. The causes are many. Some are substantial and some are inconsequential, but all must be given serious consideration. Among them are:

The fact that politics is a method of reconciling clashes of interest and therefore necessarily deals with controversial issues. Many churches feel that they are not prepared or equipped to deal with such issues. Selfishness, prejudice, greed are deeply involved in political matters and readily rise to the surface. Some churches diligently try to avoid arousing these passions and even try to ignore their existence.

Is it a proper function of the church to try to reconcile contending parties, so that justice and human welfare will result? If so, political parties and the efficiency of executive and legislative bodies are important. The church needs to demonstrate what love in action means in political affairs. Complete avoidance of the really stubborn and difficult political problems would give the world the impression that the church has nothing important to contribute to this area. We seek, as the Call says, "a

church with bonds of Christian fellowship so strong that it dares to discuss and act upon civic and political issues."

The belief that the church is "out of bounds" when it deals with politics. Some people think that the church is operating in an area where it has no special competence when it deals with political issues. It is argued that the church should stay out of the province of the state so that it can protest any intrusion of the state into the domain of the church. It is the American tradition that neither church nor state must exercise authority over the other. Each must recognize its own limitations and respect the authority of the other. As the Call states, we are "for maintaining the independence of the churches and the state, and for creative cooperation between them."

While the church and the state are separate institutions, this fact does not remove the state from moral or religious judgments, nor exempt the church from the authority of the state's laws. Indeed, the church would fail in its distinct responsibility if it did not admonish, instruct, and rebuke the government when moral, ethical, or religious values were involved. For religion, unlike the church, does have a universal moral claim. It is therefore the business of the church to remind the government of this universal claim since both church and state are under God. The church has no special competence in the area of political decision, except in its ability to discern ethical and religious issues. Its peculiar and essential contribution to political life is therefore to find a way in which political decisions can be made in the perspective of moral and religious values.

The contempt which the average citizen holds for politics and politicians. This, however, is a reason why the churches should redeem politics rather than make politics a scapegoat for personal frustrations, and politicians whipping boys for our common ailments. Churches could change the American attitude toward politics in one generation. This could be done by showing genuine concern for the public life, by sharing responsibility for crucial political decisions through study and discussion in the churches, and by recruiting young people for life-long public service. So the Call encourages "the critical evaluation, within the fellowship of the church and in the perspective of the Christian faith, of the policies and practices of candidates, office holders, and political parties."

What can the churches do?

Churches can take politics seriously. They can encourage discussion of international, racial, and economic affairs, which are "political," leaving individuals free to make their decisions and take action according to their own judgment. They can study the process of policy formation in political parties, state and national legislative assemblies, executive and judicial bodies. They can recommend improvements in the procedures of political parties. This does not entail partisanship, for both political parties have persons within them who hold all varieties of opinion on these matters. Nor does it involve the churches in campaigns to support political candidates. Rather, it means that the church will challenge its members to study the qualifications of candidates, to weigh political decisions in the light of the Christian faith, and to make political choices with a deep sense of responsibility.

It was not by avoiding the world with its political problems that God redeemed the world; it was by sending his Son into the world, to take upon himself its conflicts and controversies, its sickness and suffering. So to redeem political life we must enter as full participants into its trials and tribulations. The first requirement is that we become involved. "Active partici-

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The penalty that good people pay for not being interested in politics is to be governed by people worse than themselves.—PLATO.

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pation of Christians in political life" is encouraged by the Call, "as voters, workers in parties, candidates, office holders and civil servants." Christians seek to redeem our civil and political life from destruction and make government "effective, representative, and responsible."

One churchman who so participated was the former Congressman Jerry Voorhis. In his book *The Christian in Politics* he writes: "The price of good government is political activity by good people. The price of Christian government is political activity by Christian people. . . . We mean the hard, tiring, usually misunderstood work which must always underlie the election of good candidates to public office."

THE CALL: RESOURCES FOR STUDY AND ACTION

Unless otherwise indicated, the following resource materials are available from the Cleveland and New York offices of the Council for Christian Social Action (addresses on page 2).

The Call to Christian Action in Society (pages 5 to 9) may become one of the significant documents of the United Church of Christ. Its significance will be determined by the use which is made of it in the churches. It provides an excellent summation of the convictions of church members concerning God's intention for our common life; and it outlines the goals which call for our united prayer and work in four major areas: international affairs, American culture, race relations, and political life.

Ministers and church leaders will want to study the Call and recommend its use in the social action committee, in the church school, and in the youth and adult groups of the church.

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The Call may lead many churches to form social action committees and to give them responsibility for developing unified programs of social action within the churches and their membership groups. Indispensable aids for such a committee are these:

A Manual for Christian Social Action, single copies, 20c each; ten or more copies @ 15c each.

It defines Christian social action; outlines its scope; suggests how responsibility for it should be carried in the church; lists issues which call for action; and suggests resources that are available in the community, in synodical and state conferences, and in the national offices. Each member of the committee should have a copy.

Tool Chest, \$1.00

This packet contains a copy of *A Manual* and other pamphlets which will be useful to the minister and chairman of the social action committee.

Christian Community, the news and program service of the Council for Christian Social Action, edited by Huber F. Klemme.

It is published monthly from September through May and is sent free to ministers and to chairmen of social action committees and to those subscribers to **SOCIAL ACTION** who indicate that they wish to receive it. Ten

or more copies will be sent to one address for **50c** each per year.

Why Does the Church Concern Itself?, 5c each; \$2.50 per hundred.

This flier presents in popular form the need for Christian social action. It is designed for wide distribution by churches.

A Train of Action, rental \$12.00.

This 16 mm. color film with sound runs 28 minutes.¹

It shows how a local church is awakened to the need for social action by the coming of a refugee family to the community.

What Happened to Hannah?, free.

This cartoon filmstrip with 33 1/3 rpm. record plays 17 minutes. It shows how a church became involved in social action when it tried to help a member solve her family problems.

You Hold the Key. Rental, 50c,¹

A 33 1/3 rpm. record which plays for 26 minutes and reveals the situations which call for so-

cial action in a city which "has no problems."

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Those denominations which participate in the National Council of Churches are joining in a Nationwide Program for Peace in 1959-60. The materials marked with an asterisk were prepared for use in this program. These and the other materials listed will be useful in exploring the section of the Call entitled "The World of Nations."

***Christian Responsibility on a Changing Planet, 35c each; 75 or more copies @ 30c each.**

The report of the Fifth World Order Study Conference of the National Council of Churches, Cleveland, Ohio, Nov. 1958.

***Study Guide to the above booklet, 25c each; 75 or more copies @ 22c each.**

***Background Papers, \$2.00 per set.**

Twelve pamphlets prepared for the Fifth World Order Study Conference.

***"The High Price of Peace," SOCIAL ACTION, May 1959, 25c.²**

Herman F. Reissig outlines the price that the U.S.A. must pay for peace; and Kenneth L. Max-

¹ Available from the Department of United Promotion, Evangelical and Reformed Church, 1720 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis 3, Mo., and 1505 Race St., Philadelphia 2, Pa.; and from the offices of the Missions Council of the Congregational Christian Churches at 14 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass.; Room 680, Flood Building, 870 Market St., San Francisco 2, Calif.; and Room 1314, 19 South La Salle St., Chicago 3, Ill.

² Single copies, 25c; 10 to 99 copies @ 20c each; and 100 or more copies @ 15c each.

well describes the contributions that churches have made to peace.

Mr. Asia and Mr. U.S.A. Talk It Over, 5c each; 100 or more @ 3c each.

Herman F. Reissig is the author of this conversation about economic assistance given by the U.S.A. to other countries. It is designed for wide distribution by the churches.

The United Nations and How It Works, 50c.

This 208-page Mentor Book by David Cushman Coyle gives a clear and useful analysis of the aims, problems, and achievements of the United Nations.

Your United Nations, 75c.

This official souvenir guide book published by the UN describes its work and includes many beautiful illustrations of its leaders and buildings.

The UN Is Your Business, free.

This attractive leaders' guide offers suggestions for the celebration of UN Day on Oct. 24.

Ideas, People and Peace, \$1.25.

This 150-page book by Chester Bowles describes the threat of world communism and the problems which face the underdeveloped nations, explores the promises of communism and of democracy, and suggests a creative policy for the U.S.A.

U.S. Policy Toward China, 50c.

This packet of study materials will help churches consider the issues involved in present U.S.A. policy toward China.

Critical Issues in the Middle East, 50c.

This study packet will help church members understand the current situation in the Middle East.

"The Population Explosion," by Richard M. Fagley, SOCIAL ACTION, December 1958, 25c.²

Populations are increasing more rapidly than the food supply in many underdeveloped countries. Mr. Fagley explores the possibilities for voluntary family planning and various theological positions toward it.

United Nations 16 mm. Film Catalogue, free.

This flier describes 27 UN films and tells how they may be secured.

AMERICAN CULTURE

The Affluent Society, \$5.00.³

John Kenneth Galbraith of Harvard describes the outmoded economic concepts which hamper the U.S.A. in its development and indicates the direction the nation should follow.

The Social Responsibility of Christians in Daily Work, \$1.00.

3 Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, Mass.

This packet prepared by the National Council of Churches gives suggestions for discussion of the dilemmas Christians face in their jobs.

"The Church and the Labor Movement," SOCIAL ACTION, 1958, 25c.²

Articles by Victor Obenhaus, Victor G. Reuther, and J. Edward Carothers.

"What Is Happening to the Farmer?" SOCIAL ACTION, February 1959, 25c.²

Articles by Lauren K. Soth, Walter H. Wilcox, and Victor Obenhaus.

"Family Income: Where Does It Go?" SOCIAL ACTION, March 1959, 25c.²

Articles by Doris E. Pullman and Thomas K. Thompson.

"Recession: Causes and Cure," SOCIAL ACTION, September 1958, 25c.²

Articles by Cameron P. Hall, Ralph E. Flanders and Hubert H. Humphrey.

"Christian Concern for the Public Schools," SOCIAL ACTION, February 1958, 25c.²

Articles by Rolfe Lanier Hunt, F. Ernest Johnson, and C. Wilard Cross.

"Christian Burial," SOCIAL ACTION for April 1959, 25c.²

Articles by Paul E. Irion, Everett W. MacNair, George D.

Alley, Ray Gibbons, and Henry G. Lippert; and a description of the Cleveland Memorial Society which helps its members make simple, dignified, inexpensive funeral arrangements.

Employed Women and the Church, 35c.

Cynthia Wedel gives the facts about the one third of American women who work outside the home and indicates changes in their role in the church.

RACE RELATIONS

Racial Integration in the Churches and in Housing, \$1.00.

A packet of resource pamphlets and program guides prepared by Galen R. Weaver and Fern Babcock.

Fellowship for Whom?, 50c; 10 or more @ 35c.

Herman H. Long reports the findings of a study of racial inclusiveness in Congregational Christian Churches.

"Toward Racially Inclusive Churches," SOCIAL ACTION, January 1959, 25c.²

Galen R. Weaver gives highlights from the study listed above; Allen Hackett and others report the experiences of churches which have included members of other racial groups.

"Housing Without Racial Barriers," SOCIAL ACTION, November 1957, 25c.²

Articles by Buell G. Gallagher,

Herman H. Long, and Galen R. Weaver.

The Bible and Race, 5c each; \$3.00 per hundred.

This popular flier was written by Chester L. Marcus for wide distribution by churches.

Sense and Nonsense About Race, 50c.

Ethel J. Alpenfels gives the findings concerning race of anthropology, psychology, and biology.

The Kingdom Beyond Caste, \$1.25.

Liston Pope gives historical perspective on race relations in the U.S.A., outlines the findings of science and religion and proposes strategies for the future.

POLITICAL LIFE

"Churchman as Citizen," SOCIAL ACTION, October 1958, 25c.²

Roger Shinn outlines the political responsibilities of Christians and Shelby Rooks gives the biblical basis for citizenship. A useful handbook on citizenship.

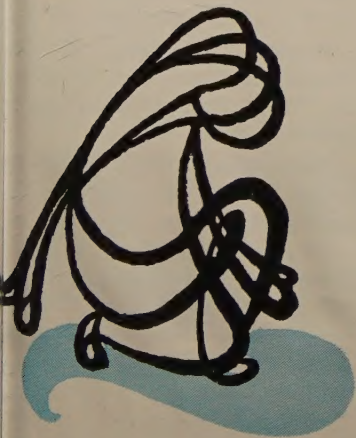
"Christians and Government," SOCIAL ACTION, March 1958, 25c.²

Articles by Donald C. Stone and Arthur H. Darken.

Register Christian Opinion, 10c.

This directory lists the members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives and gives the membership of Congressional committees.

USE OF THE CALL IN WORSHIP



The "Call to Christian Action in Society" (pages 5-9) represents the best available consensus within the United Church of Christ concerning the bearing of our faith upon social issues. While it was designed for individual and group study, it will be useful in corporate worship as well.

The Call will be helpful in congregational worship and in meetings of various church committees and groups. High school and college youth, couples clubs and women's and men's fellowships will want to study

the Call and act upon it. Such study and discussion will make its use in worship more meaningful. Recalling how many individuals and groups shared in creating this call to newness of life and responsible action increases its value.

The Call may be used as a whole or in parts. Suggestions follow for its use in a series of services of worship:

The Introductory Section might be used alone or in combination with one of the other sections. It might be read by the leader or used responsively, thus:

Leader: The Gospel is the Good News. . . .

Response: At the same time. . . .

Leader: God has made us. . . .

Response: We confess. . . .

Unison: We rejoice . . . against injustice and oppression.

The World of Nations. The leader might read the first three sections and then bid the group to pray in unison the petitions that follow.

SCRIPTURE: *Psalm* 46:8-10; *Psalm* 120; *Isaiah* 2:3f.; *Luke* 12:16-21; *James* 4:1-3.

HYMNS: God of Grace and God of Glory; God the Omnipotent; Thy Kingdom Come, O Lord; Turn Back, O Man, Forswear Thy Foolish Ways.

American Culture. The four

paragraphs introducing the section might be read by the leader; and the petitions read in unison.

SCRIPTURE: *Deuteronomy* 6:10-12; *Job* 31:16-22; *Matthew* 6:25-33; *Acts* 4:32-37; *Rom.* 12:2-21.

HYMNS: When Israel Was in Egypt's Land; God of Our Fathers Whose Almighty Hand.

Race Relations. The introductory paragraph might be read by the leader; and the petitions read in unison.

SCRIPTURE: *Genesis* 1:26-31; *Matthew* 23:8-9; *Luke* 15; *Romans* 3:29-30; *Gal.* 3:23-29.

HYMNS: In Christ There Is No East or West; Lord, I Want to Be a Christian; These Things Shall Be.

Political Life. The leader might read the introductory paragraph and ask the people to read the petitions in unison.

SCRIPTURE: *Matthew* 17:14-27; *Acts* 5:29; *Colossians* 1:18-20; *I Peter* 2:13-17; *Romans* 13:8-10.

HYMNS: God Send Us Men Whose Aim 'Twill Be; My Country, 'Tis of Thee; O Beautiful for Spacious Skies.

Dedication. This paragraph might be used as a prayer following any of the other sections.

(Prepared by Galen R. Weaver, Secretary for Racial and Cultural Relations, CCSA.)